The People's Korea

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S. KOREAN PEOPLE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS & A DECENT LIVING!

Broad sections of the South Korean people are now developing large-scale struggles for peaceful unification of the fatherland and for democratic rights and for a decent living.

Korean Employes At U. S. Bases Launch Sit-down Demonstration

About 400 South Korean workers employed by paratroopers' units of the U. S. Eighth Army gathered and started a sit-down demonstration on the afternoon of Jan. 31 in front of the headquarters of the Eighth Army in Seoul, demanding higher wages and collective bargainings for a labor contract, according to a report from Seoul.

The report said that these workers had been fighting for higher wages, a labor contract, and shorter working hours. They were particularly resented over the wage differentials between them and Japanese employes at U. S. bases and installations in Japan, pointing out that Korean workers were receiving less than half of the wages paid to Japanese workers.

Recently, under pressure of the mounting struggle for higher wages, U. S. military authorities in South Korea announced that they were intending to double the wages for South Korean employes.

The 400 workers staged the sit-down demonstration to demand early fulfillment of the promised raise.

S. Korean Railway Workers Strike For Better Conditions

Workers of the communication department of the South Korean railways carried out a one-hour strike at 10 a. m. Jan. 27 to press their demands for better working conditions, according to a Seoul report.

Participating in the strike were about 2,000 railway communication workers in Seoul, Taejun, Pusan, Chunchun, Andong, Samchuk and other cities. Workers in other departments of the government-operated railways also joined in the strike.

Railway communication throughout the whole of South Korea was paralyzed temporarily on that day, with the operation of about 3,500 telephone exchange boards being completely suspended.

The strike action was part of the struggle, continuing since last October, of South Korean railway workers for a five-point demand, including double wages and travel allowances and shorter working hours.

The Transportation Department of the South Korean "Government" on Jan. 25 proposed a 20 per cent wage hike plan to the struggling workers, after adamantly refusing to accept the five-point demand.

The strike action of the railway workers on Jan. 27 was an answer to this appeasement proposal. Instead of accepting the workers' demand, the Transportation Department is reportedly intending to discharge about 200 strike leaders and to bring legal action against some of them.

Reports from Seoul said that railway workers were planning to launch further strike actions in protest against this plan and to force the "Government" to accept their demand.

Teachers Struggle For Union Rights, For Raise In Allowances

Teachers in South Korea are developing stubborn struggles in support of the statement of Jan. 14 by the Federation of Teachers' Unions, expressing its determination to fight for its legality.

The teachers of junior and senior high schools in Taegu carried out on Jan. 26 a 48-hour "sit-down" strike in their schools, demanding the legality of their organization and a monthly allowance of 30,000 huan, according to a Taegu broadcast.

Teachers of other schools in the province launched actions in concert with Taegu teachers.

Taegu Radio also said that the teachers would resort to more powerful actions unless their demands were met.

Meanwhile, Donghua Tongshin reported that teachers other than those affiliated with the above-mentioned organization were also demanding increased allowances, adding that about 1,000 teachers in Junju and 800 in Taejun held street demonstrations.

Further, a Seoul report said about 500 teachers in Kangwon Province met in the city of Chunchun and decided to fight for a monthly allowance of 40,000 huan as well as for teachers' rights and guarantee for their status. After the meeting, they held a street demonstration, the report said.

Teachers in Raju, Yongyang, Mokpo, Kuangju, Sunchun, Ryusu, Chungju and various other cities and towns also held street demonstrations at the end of January, demanding a raise in their allowances.

Soviet Paper, Trud, Stresses Autonomous Unification

The Soviet paper, Trud, dated Jan. 22 carried an article by Pavlov entitled "Korea must be unified," Radio Pyongyang said quoting a Tass report.

The writer recalled various measures that had been taken for peaceful unification of the fatherland by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

He noted that political parties and civic organizations in South Korea recently organized the National Front for Unification of the Fatherland. Pavlov emphasized that this was proof to the fact that in South Korea there were growing movements for removing the artificial boundary and constructing a unified and independent country.

The article stressed that Korea must be unified without interference by foreign countries and that, for this purpose, the U. S. Forces should be withdrawn immediately from South Korea.

The writer said, "The day is near when mines and barbed wire will be removed from the military boundary and when parents in North Korea will be able to embrace their children now in South Korea..... Now, all Koreans are fighting for a unified, democratic Korea."

Hungarian Paper Supports Peaceful Unification

The Jan. 27 issue of "Nepszabadsag", organ of the Hungarian Workers' Party, carried an article supporting the national demand of the Korean people for peaceful unification of the fatherland, Radio Pyongyang said quoting a report from Budapest.

The article pointed out that movements for peaceful unification were mounting day by day in South Korea, paying special attention to the fact that the Central Council for Independent National Unification, recently formed in South Korea, and the National Front for Unification of the Fatherland had proposed autonomous unification of the fatherland and demanded economic and cultural interchange, exchange of letters and personal intercourse between South and North.

It said that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea again recently made a realistic and rational proposal for peaceful unification of Korea and made mention of the statement of Jan. 18 by the Central Committee of the Fatherland Front, which demanded early realization of negotiation and economic and cultural interchange between South and North.

The article concluded that Korea should be unified without interference by foreign countries.

Pusan Port Workers Win Major Victory

— After Fierce Struggle For Higher Wages —

The strike of Pusan port and harbor workers was called off after continuing for 57 hours, as the management agreed to raise the workers' wages by 40 per cent from Feb. 1 and cancelled the suspension from work of six trade union leaders, according to a report from Pusan.

The Pusan workers had been engaging in fierce struggle for higher wages since Dec. 12 of last year.

The South Korean authorities, adamantly refusing to accept the demand, answered the workers' struggle with a disciplinary action to suspend six active trade unionists from work.

Angered by the action, the workers called a strike on Jan. 25. As a result, loading and unloading work at the port was completely paralyzed, forcing the South Korean authorities and contractors to yield to the workers' demand.

2,000 S. Korean Soldiers Deserted In 9 Days

The number of deserters from the South Korean puppet army is daily increasing, according to reports from South Korea. A report said that as many as 2,000 soldiers deserted from puppet armed forces in nine days, or an average of more than 200, between Jan. 14 and 22.

Needy Taegu Citizens Demonstrate For Free Distribution Of Rice

About 200 needy citizens of Taegu, South Korea, demonstrated on Jan. 26 in front of a government office in the city for about three hours, demanding that the "Government" immediately release relief rice to save them from starvation, according to a Taegu report.

They had earlier held similar demonstration on Jan. 19 and 24.

NORTH KOREA–AN EARTHLY PARADISE FOR PEOPLE!

In the northern part of the Republic, Socialist construction is now in full swing. With the construction progressing rapidly, people's life is getting richer day by day. Thus, the northern part of the Republic has been turned into an earthly paradise for the people.

Pyongyang In 1961

Large-scale Construction Under Way

Pyongyang, our democratic capital, has risen heroically from ruins left in the wake of the war.

The construction workers of Pyongyang rendered a splendid labor exploit in the first three weeks of this year. All the building management offices fulfilled their plans. Ear-splitting noises of cranes and bulldozers! Flashes of welding machines! New buildings are being built every day at each building site in spite of the cold winter season.

According to statistics released by the General Construction Bureau of Pyongyang City People's Committee, the speed of construction is now five times that in 1956. There is no doubt that the most up-to-date operation method and mechanization will record a new success in the history of urban construction this year. As a result, Pyongyang—the democratic people's capital, will be turned into a more magnificent, beautiful and comfortable socialist city. The construction, started last year, of new residential quarters, on the north-western and south-eastern outskirts of Pyongyang City will be completed this year.

Many school buildings including a new twenty-storeyed school building of Kim Il Sung University, with a floor space of 100,000 centiares, will be newly built. A twelve-storeyed children's palace, a library of science and a circus theatre, each with a floor space of 45, 000, 14,000 and 13,000 centiares respectively, will be brought to completion this year. Besides, large buildings such as an art museum, a cultural centre, a children's department store, Pyongyang Hotel and so forth will be completed. Many clinics and prophylactic stations including three children's hospitals, each with a floor space of 500 centiares, will be newly built.

"Make the people's living more pleasant, convenient and their life richer!"—this was the slogan for the people who rose resolutely for construction from amidst the ruins left in the wake of the war. There have been built over 350 schools of all levels including more than 30 higher educational institutions, in Pyongyang—a city where there were only three colleges in the dark era of Japanese imperialism. Kindergartens and children's homes have been built in all the residential districts. Theatres and cinema-houses, with a total capacity of accomodating 20, 000 persons or more, including the Grand Theatre with 2,000 seats, will be built. Especially, the Grand Theatre will be one of the greatest prides of Pyongyang citizens. More than 270 clinics and prophylactic stations including 23 hospitals have been built and are protecting citizens' health. Besides, in and around the city large and small parks and recreation grounds covering over 3,000 chungbo (one chungbo is equal to 2.45 acres) will be built so that the citizens may enjoy a more comfortable life. Stores, restaurants and subsidiary food processing factories will be established near all the apartment housing projects. A network of 1,200 retail stores will cover the city in order to meet the growing demand of citizens for daily necessaries.

Moreover, there will be built in Pyongyang six big refrigeration factories, 38 bean-curd making factories and an edible oil manufacturing factory consuming annually 30,000 tons of raw materials.

A socialist city advancing along the road of socialism to meet fully the material and cultural needs of the citizens —this is today's Pyongyang and tomorrow's Pyongyang as well.

Giant Iron Works Rose From Ruins

Whanghai Iron Works—one of our prides!

Our Socialist fatherland is a country rapidly advancing like a "Flying Horse" to accomplish the Seven Year Plan, the great program for the victory of socialism. The whole country is full of hope, pride and wonders.

Whanghai Iron Works, one of our prides, is located at Songrim City in North Whanghai Province where the Daidong and the Jeryung meet and flow into the West Sea. A towering blast furnace with an annual production capacity of 250,000 tons, two coal melting furnaces with a capacity of 600,000 tons, giant open-hearth furnaces and rolling machines illuminating the night sky, and groups of working heroes armed with Marxism-Leninism and modern techniques! This is the present day figure of Whanghai Iron Works filled with youthful energy. From here hundreds of cars of steel ingots, steel products and pig iron are shipped to plants and construction sites all over the country.

This Works was completely destroyed twice in only 16 years: by the fleeing Japanese forces 16 years ago and by the U. S. aggressors 10 years ago. The U. S. imperialists dropped 7,000 bombs on this Works.

However, the Korean workers have completely rebuilt this iron producing center on the ruins, overcoming difficult conditions.

In only one year ten thousand blueprints were drawn and 11,000 tons of steel frames prepared. About 600 small and medium machines were assembled. The successful construction of this Works promoted rapidly technical progress of our country.

As a result of large-scale introduction of modern techniques, steel-making time has been reduced by 3.5 to 5.5 hours, compared with that required when it was operated by Japanese imperialists. As for the open-hearth furnaces, products per centiare have been doubled.

Workers who were barred from receiving technical training under Japanese rule are now operating modern equipment and facilities. Co-operating with scientists, they have succeded in using iron coke for the production of pig iron for the first time in the world. Now, about 700 technicians and experts are working here, among whom seven are honored with the title of "Hero of Labour."

The city of Songrim where workers were crowded in shabby huts has been changed into a new cultural city with broad streets lined with towering apartments, theatres, cinemas and schools. The workers are at the same time students of technical colleges or technical high schools. Last year workers' monthly salary averaged approximately four times that in 1953.

They are rapidly forging ahead to surmount the summit of the Seven-Year Plan under the slogan, "One man for all and all for one." Before long, this Works will be developed into a big metallurgic combine with a capacity of producing annually one million tons of pig iron, 1,200,000 tons of coke and 800,000 tons of steel.

Co-op. Farmers In N. Korea Sing The Joys Of Comfortable Life

"What a wonderful crop it is!"
Co-op. farmers are delighted with good harvest.

In the rural areas of the northern half of the Republic, farmers are in high spirits, determined to fulfil this year's production target of 5 million tons of grain. Farmers have harvested good crops for several years.

All the farmers are very happy. Bags of grain are piled high at every house.

Ju Won Bok, a member of the Man Kyung Dae Agricultural Cooperative in Pyongyang, received 10.2 tons of grain—which is sufficient to sustain his family of eight for three years, and a cash income of 3,362 won last year.

Moreover, he earned a considerable additional income last year, for he raised three pigs and several scores of chickens and rabbits as a side line. On the evening of the settling day of the cooperative, he gathered his family members and said: "What we are, we owe entirely to the socialist system, the Korean Workers' Party and Marshal Kim Il Sung...." And as he spoke of his past, full of sad and bitter memories, a thousand emotions crowded on his mind.

Ju Won Bok was a farmer's man. His father and grandfather were also farmer's men. In autumn of a certain year when his father went to a mountain to gather firewood leading the landlord's cow, he fell over a precipice together with the cow and broke his ribs. After lying on his sickbed for a long time, his father breathed his last, when Ju Won Bok was only seven years old.

After that, he had to work as a famer's man on the landlord's farm in place of his father. He married and had seven children. But he could not get out of the plight of a farmer's man.

After Liberation, the people's regime completely changed his life. He was given five chungbos of farm-land free of charge. People became the masters of farm-land and the country. Completely barred from the blessings of civilization, he had been illiterate before Liberation.

But now everything was different. He began to learn to read and write and his children entered a school. The people's regime directed a thorough care to the farmers' living. During the war, the Party and the people's regime provided farmers with food and seeds and advanced funds to them. After the war, the state exempted farmers from repaying the food and seeds provided during the war and continued advancing necessary funds.

Before long, an agricultural cooperative was formed. He was the first to join it. Since then, his family's living has become richer from year to year. A dilapidated straw-thatched shack was pulled down and a big tile-roofed house was built for his family. He worked very hard. His sons came back home from the front. He and his sons all became model cooperative members. Last year, he and his family received a share of grain five times greater in amount than they reaped as private farmers.

Thanks to the completion of irrigation system, they need not worry about floods and droughts any longer. Tractors, lorries and other farm machines have taken the place of laborious manual work on the farm. It is now easy and pleasant to work on the farm. People's life is growing richer day after day.

"What a wonderful thing it is to cultivate farm-land with tractors, sow seeds with sowing machines and reap crops with combines, the whole of the village working as one family under the warm care of the Party! Without a cooperative, I cannot get along for a moment...."

People's Economy Of DPRK In 1960

Total Industrial Output Rises 3.5 Times In 4 Yrs.

(KNS-Tokyo) The Central Statistical Bureau of the DPRK released production figures, summing up the results of the development of the people's economy in 1960, according to a Pyongyang radio-broadcast of Jan. 20.

According to the broadcast, the industrial production plan was over-fulfilled by 3 per cent and the total industrial output was 3.5 times in value that in 1956. The amount of grain production reached 3,803,000 tons, registering a 40 per cent advance over the figure for 1949 and a two-fold increase over the 1946 production. National income advanced 10 per cent over 1959 and 120 per cent over the 1956 figure.

Industrial production by main items in 1960 is as follows in value:

Electric power	9,139,000,000 kw/h
Coal	10,620,000 tons
Iron ore	3,108,000 tons
Pig iron and ground iron	872,000 tons
Steel	641,000 tons
Steel products	474,000 tons
Electric motors	33,000
Tractors	3,002
Automobiles	3,111
Chemical fertilizer	561,000 tons
Cement	2,285,000 tons
Sheet glass	70,000 centiares

In the rural economy, 12,500 tractors, 839 lorries and 49,000 farm machines were newly put into operation last year. The total amount of work by tractors last year was 2 times that in 1959, enabling North Korean farmers to save over 40 million man-days.

Last year's transportation of goods by railway, by lorries and by cargo-boats increased by 10 per cent, 19 per cent and 9 per cent respectively, compared with the previous year's figures.

The total amount of fund investment for the construction of basic industries reached 570 million won last year. The amount of investment for housing projects construction rose by 22 per cent last year, compared with that in the previous year.

The average wage of workers and office workers increased by 6 per cent last year as compared with that for the previous year. This represented a 130 per cent gain over 1956. The general living standard of farmers reached the level of a middle-class or a rich middle-class farmer.

Workers and office workers received 2,190,000 centiares of state-owned housing projects last year. This was 31 per cent increase compared with that in the previous year. Last year, agricultural cooperatives also built many dwelling houses with their own funds.

In the school year of 1960-1961, there were 2,530,000 students and pupils in the northern half of the Republic. Among them were 276,000 students of technical schools, 129,000 students of middle and higher special schools and 100,000 students of higher educational institutions. In accordance with the educational policy of the Party, there were newly built last year 11 communist universities in each Province and 24 technical colleges at factories, enterprises, farms and stock-farms so that people might learn while working.

Thirty-four theatres and cinema houses were newly built last year. Hospitals increased by 9 per cent last year as compared with those in the preceding year and the number of beds increased by 4,000. As a result, the average life expectancy in the northern part of the Republic was prolonged by more than 20 years compared with that in the era of Japanese imperialist rule.

Repatriates Join In Socialist Construction

A repatriate actively joins in Socialist construction.

Several repatriates from Japan are now happily working at Pyongyang Silk Spinning Plant. Given newly-built apartments near the plant in the center of East Pyongyang, they are enjoying a happy and hopeful life, working in accordance with their ability and wishes.

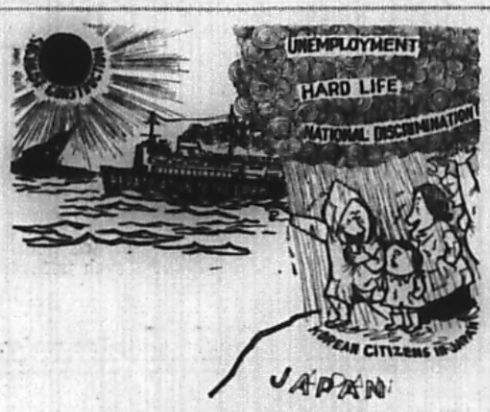
Mr. Choi Kil Kuon and his wife, repatriated from Kyoto aboard the first ship, are working together in this factory. As he had been working on unemployment relief projects or as a peddler in a foreign country, he was struck with wonder by the happy life of workers free from suppression, exploitation and unemployment in the fatherland.

In Japan, he worked at a textile plant for a while. Referring to the working conditions in Japan, he said reflectively, "Many workers are killed or injured by accidents at work, owing to the lack of labor protection equipment and facilities. Plants in our country are perfectly equipped with labor protection and safety facilities. Members of the work safety maintenance committee at our plant are always taking good care of workers. Human dignity is fully guaranteed only under the Socialist system where working people are the masters of the country." There is no reason why workers cannot happily devote themselves to their task under this system.

His wife is also working in this factory. She worked as a spinner in Japan for twenty years. She is receiving maternity leave with pay. This couple said that the plant was just like their home, as the spirit of mutual aid and love prevails among the workers at the plant.

Miss Son Kil Rim is working at the daily necessaries making department of this plant. She also came back home aboard the first ship. She has now become a fifth-grade worker thanks to help by her fellow-workers, though she had never been engaged in the cloth cutting operation in Japan. She is excellently fulfilling her daily task. Last September, she had a good time, camping at Seuk-am in South Pyongan Province. She always remembers the happy life there. She said proudly, "In Japan, a Korean worker like me cannot even imagine taking rest in such a place. My eldest son spent his summer vacation also at a camp sponsored by the Union of Korean Democratic Youth."

These three repatriates, after finishing their daily work, see a film or a drama at their club, or enjoy singing or dancing at a cultural circle. At the same time they are learning techniques at an engineering school organized by the plant.



Look! The sun shines over there!

—Che Jun

Against "ROK-Japan Talks"

Japanese People Launch Movements For Peaceful Unification Of Korea

The Japanese government and the Chang Myun regime are holding "ROK-Japan Talks" to normalize "diplomatic relations" between South Korea and Japan. The Japanese people, however, are launching movements against this intrigue.

About 200 delegates of 30 member organizations of the Liaison Council Against "ROK-Japan Talks" attended a gathering at the first Dietmen's Hall on the afternoon of Feb. 2. This gathering was held in order to launch a movement to demand immediate discontinuation of the "ROK-Japan Talks" and to support the peaceful unification of Korea. The Liaison Council will hold a "Central Protest Rally" at the end of this month.

In Osaka, a united rally against "ROK-Japan Talks" and armed interference by the U. S. and Japan in Laotian affairs was held at the Nakanoshima Public Hall, attended by 1,500 persons. It was sponsored by the Osaka Regional Council Against the U.S.-Japan "Security" Treaty. Included among the guests were delegation members of the General Federation of Chinese Trade Unions. They encouraged the participants in their struggle for world peace and against the U. S. imperialists' policy of aggression.

The rally adopted a declaration opposing "ROK-Japan Talks" and three resolutions. These resolutions called for an end to military interference in Laos, demanded normalization of diplomatic relations with China, and denounced the U. S.-Japan "Security" Treaty. Later, they held a street demonstration.

Meanwhile, Socialist and Communist interpellators grilled severely the Government in the Diet on the above-mentioned problems.

Prime Minister Ikeda was pressed hard by Kanju Kato of the Socialist Party on Jan. 30 in the current session of the House of Representatives, by Saburo Eda, acting chairman of the same party on Jan. 31 and by Sanzo Nosaka, chairman of the Central Committee of the Japan Communist Party, on Feb. 1 in the House of Councillors.

The interpellators, pointing out the unreasonableness of holding the "ROK-Japan Talks," charged:

1. that it is illogical and impracticable to try to solve the problems concerning the interests of all the Korean people with the Chang Myun regime, which is not qualified to represent the whole of Korea.

2. that continuation of "ROK-Japan Talks" is intended to obstruct the peaceful unification of Korea and to perpetuate the present division of the country, when all the Korean people are demanding the peaceful unification.

3. that "ROK-Japan Talks" lead to the formation of a NEATO, which will be a serious threat to peace in Asia.

The interpellators demanded that the Japanese authorities make all-out efforts for concluding a trade agreement with the DPRK to realize direct trade and contribute to the peaceful unification of Korea.

South Korea Under U. S. Occupation

Starvation Stalks In S. Korean Villages

These are part of columns of recent South Korean newspapers.
Above : Minkuk Ilbo of Jan. 25
Below : Hankuk Ilbo of Jan. 26

They read in part: "Villagers living next door to death from starvation," "a gipsy village of Korean style," "130 households crowded in a valley of starvation."

Today the word "Bori-goge" (Barley Pass) is on the lips of many people in South Korea. Or, you can often hear the word "Chunkung-ki" (spring destitution period). Petty peasants must eke out a scanty living with harvest through all winter and manage to live from hand to mouth till May or June when they can harvest spring barley. However, it is usual for them to be out of stock of food long before May or June. Running out of food, they are forced to eat grass, roots or barks of trees to keep body and soul together. Thus, the word "Bori-goge" has been on the lips of peasants to express the worst condition of peasants in this season.

Such a situation can be found where and when politics is in a chaotic state and the country is in agitation. Thus, "Bori-goge," which is very difficult for poor peasants to pass, has been a matter for tears for peasants. "Chunkung-ki" (spring destitution period) ranges usually from April to June. "Bori-goge" or "Chunkung-ki" is by no means a new social phenomenon. This was common under Japanese imperialist rule.

For 16 years since the Liberation, South Korea, once the granary of Korea, has been turned into "a land of starvation." In her reportage titled "South Korea—a state faced with death," a Swedish woman correspondent writes: "If we make a list of poor countries, there will be no doubt that South Korea fairly ranks first in the world. South Korean peasants are leading a primitive life completely barred from the blessings of modern civilization and a large number of people are desperately struggling to earn their daily bread in towns and cities. Apart from people's extreme poverty miserable enough to make any European tourist knit their brows, there is a handful of well-fed and well-clad people draining the cup of pleasure to the dregs. Things are getting more serious owing to a shortage of manpower resulting from a superfluous military forces of over 750,000 strong."

Especially, pitiable conditions of the peasantry occupying more than 70 per cent of the population are beyond description. Describing the misery of peasants' life, Tong-a Ilbo, a leading bourgeois newspaper of South Korea, writes: "Bitter complaints of peasants are mounting day after day. With back-breaking labor from before dawn to late evening, they can barely eat a bowl of gruel mixed with grass. Mothers, with dry breasts, try in vain to suck their hungry, screaming babies, thin like shadows."

A mother's breast dries. She tries in vain to suck her hungry baby.

Here are some figures indicating the worsening situation of food-shortage among South Korean peasants. Out of the total 2,200,000 farming households, 600,000 were in short of food in 1956, and 1,200,000 in 1957. In 1958, South and North Kyungsang provinces and Cholla provinces alone had 700,000 farming households embracing a population of 3 million in short of food. It must be noted that there were best harvests favored with good weather conditions in 1957 and 1958 since the August 15 Liberation. By the early spring of 1959, 700,000 farming households were already in short of food. Even according to the conservative figures released by the South Korean authorities, there were no less than 3 million food-short peasants that year.

The situation was still worse last year. In Jan. of last year, there were 808,000 food-short peasants in the western coastal areas and 848,000 in the basin of the River Rakdong. The whole of the Cholla provinces, once the granary of South Korea, was in a state of food-shortage. Hankuk Ilbo of Nov. 29 of last year wrote: "According to information obtained from the North Kyungsang province authorities, approximately 40 per cent of the total 390,000 farming households in this province are in short of food. In those drought-stricken counties of Andong, Bonghua, Ryechun and Sangju, peasants are eating grass, roots, barks of trees, or acorns to survive."

Have things turned somewhat favorable this year? The answer is "No." The above-mentioned Hankuk Ilbo of Jan. 26 writes: "As of Jan. 24 scarcely three months after last autumn's crops, 144,779 farming households in South Kyungsang province (40 per cent of the total farming households in the province) had run out of food and pupils going to school without lunch numbered 180,000."

According to recent reports from South Korea, the peasants of the Cholla provinces are already in the spring destitution period, two months earlier than usual. In Koksung County of South Cholla province, more than 80 per cent of farming households are destitute of food. Owing to the aggravating food situation in various counties of the province such as Damyang, Kurye and Raju, nearly two hundred persons, faced with starvation and cold, committed suicide.

Meanwhile, there is a constant stream of peasants leaving their dear home villages in North Cholla province to escape from starvation. In Buan County of the same province, utterly run out of decent food, out of the total 18,000 farming households about 14,000, without food supplies, have barely lived for the last several months on scraps of vegetables, grass, roots and barks of trees. As a result, almost all of them are suffering from malnutrition and are entirely unfit for work.

An old woman—barely making a living by picking up rags.

The above-mentioned Hankuk Ilbo of Jan. 26 reports on the realities of Yukri village in Buan County, where 1,318 farming households out of 1,334 are completely out of stock of food supplies and are barely living on grass, roots and barks of tress:

"Shivering with cold together with his five children in a stone-cold room exposed to biting winds blowing from the western coast, Li Kyung Su, 41, complained in tears of last year's poor crops, which amounted to only two straw-bags of rice, owing to a long spell of drought."

He has been earning a bare living by carrying railway passengers' baggage in a nearby town since September of last year. However, unable to sustain his family with this casual job, he is now forced to quit his home village and go to Seoul in search of a livelihood."

It must be remembered that Li was a middle-class farmer with about 10 acres of farmland. This suffices to show what a plight petty farmers are in.

Another South Korean newspaper, Minkuk Ilbo, of Jan. 25 writes: "Shinchun village in the neighborhood of Taegu City is starving. It is in the grip of death! People there are either suffering from malnutrition or on the brink of death. They are utterly deprived of the will to live on. Jet planes flying above the roofs, leaving terrific noise behind, are no longer an attraction to the emaciated children of this famine-stricken village."

"With his only son drafted by the army, Yang Bal, 72, living or, to be more exact, starving with his wife of about the same age, said: "Under Syngman Rhee's rule we sometimes received relief rice. But now we cannot expect a helping hand from the Chang Myun regime. It is too late, now. Only death awaits us. I wish we could survive till our son comes home!"

It is long since voices demanding relief rice were raised. Turning a deaf ear to people's voices, the Chang Myun regime is frantically pursuing the policy of seeking more "aid" from the United States and of inducting monopolistic capital investments from Japan. On the other hand, the regime is lost in a factional strife, flatly refusing to accept fraternal aid from the northern half of the Republic.

"The Second Republic" formed at the sacrifice of the South Korean people in the wake of the April popular uprising of last year is "a republic unworthy of a penny whistle" (Minkuk Ilbo of Jan. 25).

It is absolutely impossible for "the Second Republic" to save this critical situation of chronic food shortage in South Korea, a land turned into "an earthly hell, ...heartless enough to sully mankind's honor" (Nilsen, an American Lutheran minister).

Only by relying on powerful and mighty economic foundations of the northern half of the Republic, the catastrophic situation of South Korea can be saved. We demand an immediate end to the U. S. occupation of South Korea. The Korean question must be solved by Korean people themselves without any foreign interference.

Reader's Column

From an Australian Reader:

Dear Friend,

Thank you for the copy of the first issue of The People's Korea. It seems to me a particularly hopeful fact that such a paper should be published by Korean residents in Japan.

Information of the sort you are so well qualified to give is of great interest and value to English readers, and I hope that your undertaking will prosper and flourish. I know something of the difficulties which such undertaking must face. I wish you every success.

With best wishes,
Yours fraternally,
From an Australian reader.

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